

California



LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS PRESS RELEASE



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CALIFORNIA LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS MOURNS THE PASSING OF RETIRED SENATOR NELL SOTO WHO DEVOTED HER ADULT LIFE TO COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE.

Sacramento CA- Today Senator Gilbert Cedillo, Chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus mourns the passing of former Senator Nell Soto after battling a long illness.

“Nell Soto was a great pioneer and fearless defender of the immigrants. She confronted racism head on with her eloquence and her passion for justice. We reaffirm our commitment for fighting and to move her vision forward in our lives and our work,” declared Senator Cedillo.

Nell Soto was elected to the State Assembly in 1998, and then served from 2000-2006 in the California Senate representing the 32nd Senatorial District. Prior to her election to the Assembly in 1998, Soto served for 12 years in the Pomona City Council. Soto is a sixth generation resident of Pomona. Soto was mother of six, grandmother of 11, and great-grandmother of 3. Her late husband Philip Soto served two terms in the State Assembly from 1962 to 66. Philip Soto was one of the first two Latinos elected in 1962.

As a legislator Nell Soto was a forceful advocate for children, working families and senior citizens. She introduced landmark legislation to create safe routes to schools, teacher parent compacts, transportation and congestion and the right to know about chemicals contaminating drinking water.

Both Nell and Phil Soto helped organize with the United Farm Workers (UFW), marched with Cesar Chavez in Delano, California, and were active in the anti-Vietnam War movement.

With her election to the Senate in 2000, Soto became the first woman elected to represent the Inland Empire in the Legislature.

“We regret the passing of retired Senator Nell Soto who fought tirelessly for our children’s education and wellbeing. We must now assume her leadership role and commitment and honor those ideals in the halls of the State Capitol,” stated Assemblymember Tony Mendoza, Vice Chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus.

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